

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 3453

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FOR NEA ONLY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, PGOV, JO, US
UUBJECT: SCHEDULING OF JMC

REF A) AMMAN 3357, B) STATE 093318

1. OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH GENERAL BIN SHAKER ABOUT THE
JMC MEETING PER REFTEL B HAVE NOW GOTTEN ENMESHED IN
KING'S REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AT
THE END OF MAY.

2. INITIALLY WE SPOKE WITH BIN SHAKER ALONG LINES OF
YOUR HELPFUL TELEGRAM, SETTING FORTH THE REASONS FOR THE
POSTPONTMENT AND OFFERING AN EARLIER DATE. BIN SHAKER
IMMEDIATELY REMARKED THAT 23-26 MAY BRIDGED JORDANIAN
ARMED FORCES AND NATIONAL DAYS CELEBRATION ON MAY 25 WHICH
HE PERSONALLY SUPERVISES AND IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE
FOR HIM TO COME. HE THEN ASKED IF THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER
ALTERNATIVE DATE FOLLOWING 26 MAY, BUT PRIOR TO JUNE 18.

3. BEFORE I REPORTED THIS INFORMATION, SHARAF RAISED
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WITH ME THE QUESTION OF THE KING'S VISIT. HE HAD HEARD OF
OUR OFFER OF EARLIER DATES FOR BIN SHAKER AND SAID THAT IN
THE CONTEXT OF THE KING'S VISIT, JORDAN NATIONAL DAY
CELEBRATION WOULD PROBABLY BE MOVED FORWARD, AND IT WOULD
BE PERFECTLY POSSIBLE AND INDEED DESIRABLE FOR BIN SHAKER
TO ACCEPT MAY 23-26 FOR THE JMC.

4. SUBSEQUENTLY BIN SHAKER, BFTER HEARING FROM SHARAF, RECONFIRMED THE SAME POINTS -- THAT IF THE KING'S VISIT DATES WERE ACCEPTABLE AS PROPOSED, HE WOULD BE FREE FROM HIS NATIONAL DAY OBLIGATIONS AND BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE 23-26 MAY DATES. ALTERNATIVELY, IF THE KING'S VISITS WERE TO BE SOME OTHER TIME, A LATER DATE IN JUNE AS HE HAD REQUESTED WOULD BE ALRIGHT. HE WAS NOT HAPPY ABOUT JUNE 18 SINCE IT WAS LATER THAN HE THOUGHT NECESSARY. I THOUGHT MT BEST TO GIVE YOU THE FULL FLAVOR OF THESE UNCERTAINTIES IN THIS CHANNEL, SO YOU COULD DECIDE ON THE BASIS OF PROGRESS, OR THE LACK THEREOF ON THE KING'S VISIT, WHAT TO TELL DOD. I AM NOT CERTAIN ABOUT HOW QUICKLY THEY WILL HAVE TO KNOW JORDAN'S PLANS IN ORDER TO LOCK IN THE JMC EARLIER DATES. AND SINCE JORDAN'S PLANS IN THIS RESPECT DEPEND ON OURS FOR THE KING, YOU WILL BE IN THE BEST POSITION TO LET DOD KNOW AT THE EARLIEST TIME WHAT IS COOKING.

5. YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOW THAT THE JMC PROBLEM CONTINUES TO LEAVE A BAD TASTE HERE. THE DAY YOUR CABLE ARRIVED (REF B) I WAS ON THE VERGE OF TELLING YOU AGAIN THAT THE KING AND BIN SHAKER HAD MADE CLEAR TO ME IN RATHER CERTAIN TERMS THEIR UNHAPPINESS ABOUT THE INCIDENT. I HAVE DONE WHAT I CAN ON THE BASIS OF YOUR CABLE TO REPAIR THE BREACH, BUT IT IS MORE A PATCH-UP JOB THAN A PERMANENT WELD. HOWEVER, IF WE CAN BE RESPONSIVE ON CONFIDENTIAL

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KING'S VISIT AND FIT BIN HSKAR INTO THE EARLIER DATES THEREBY, I BELIEVE THIS TREMOR WILL HAVE NO LONG-LASTING EFFECT. PICKERING

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